

## Exploring The Influence of Emotional Intelligence on MNC Employees' Job Performance in Southern State of Malaysia

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### Abstract

This study aims to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance among employees in one multinational company that operated in southern state of Malaysia. Emotional intelligence was measured by the Wong & Law Emotional Intelligence Scale, while job performance was assessed by the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire. Data of this study were gathered from 103 employees or to be exact the operators who rated their emotional intelligence and job performance. The findings show that the level of emotional intelligence and job performance was found to be high. The result from the structural equation modelling analysis reveals that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance among the operators. The significance explains that having good emotional control at work can help operators do their tasks more effectively. On top of that, offering training programs that are designed to help employees manage their emotions at work effectively is one recommendation provided for the organization to their operators. As for future researchers, it is suggested that the researchers can employ a mixed-method approach by integrating qualitative and quantitative methods when collecting data.

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Job Performance, Operator.

### Introduction

The ability of companies to remain significant in the global economy depends on having competent and productive workers. Companies bear the responsibility of diligently observing factors that could affect workers' productivity or job performance. According to Fogaca et al.

(2018), job performance is important in organizations for two reasons. Firstly, high job performance boosts productivity and improves customer service quality. An organization with high-performing individuals is capable of competing at both the local and global levels. Furthermore, a good employee will be able to prevent and solve problems, as well as assist the organization in the production of goods or the delivery of services. Second, the end product of employees' work in organizations is their own performance. Being able to perform one's duties correctly and efficiently can provide a sense of accomplishment, pride, and increased motivation (Noviani, 2021). While poor job performance may cause dissatisfaction and be viewed as a sign of failure, excellent job performance can lead to positive recognition for the individual. Hence, it is not surprising that both organizations and individuals are concerned about performance (Noviani, 2021).

Malaysians are more aware of changes in emotional intelligence related to their present job performance as a result of pandemic-related changes in the employment field. Some companies are forced to downsize their workforce by laying off employees, causing the burden of the remaining employees to increase. According to Vijayan (2017), extremely high workload levels are frequently related to stress. Long-term stress can result in a range of emotional disorders, from mild to severe (Joyce et al., 2016). Boredom, lethargy, rage, frustration, and hatred will all result as an outcome of this (Westgate & Wilson, 2018). Emotional intelligence, according to Norboevich (2020), manifests itself in the ability to understand the needs and desires of consumers, detect and control one's emotions, empathize with others, persuade others, and communicate. However, if a person's emotions are disrupted, their emotional intelligence will deteriorate to the point where they are unable to control their own emotions.

Although not in a pandemic situation, generally it can be seen that low levels of emotional intelligence may occur due to a variety of reasons such as working hours, allocated responsibilities, and so on. According to Altindag & Kosedagi (2015), failure to build effective emotional intelligence among employees could have a detrimental impact on task completion, placing the growth and success of individuals and businesses in risk. It can be strengthened opinion by Supramaniam & Singaravelloo (2021) that emotional intelligence will aid job performance by allowing employees to regulate their emotions and stress, as well as maintaining excellent productivity under hardship by adapting to organizational change. In addition, according to Saha & Shaw (2020), correctly managed emotional intelligence assists employees in using their emotions sensibly, especially in selecting effective appropriate management strategies in disagreements and improving the ability to do the job.

It can be said that when employees are not productive, it will affect employee's job performance. Poor job performance has a negative impact on an organization's productivity and quality (Janardhanan & Raghavan, 2018). Their study also discovered that poor performers contributed to a 20% decrease in output. Firstly, according to a press release from the Department of Statistics Malaysia in February 2016, the manufacturing sector's (including multinational companies) overall performance fell to 2.4 percent while the productivity per person decreased by 6.9 percent (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2016). Over and above that, the Bank Negara Malaysia Annual Report 2017 revealed that the manufacturing industry's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the year 2016 fell to 4.4 percent, down from 4.9 percent in 2015 (Bank Negara Malaysia, 2017). The baseline goal for the national agenda is to increase manufacturing industry productivity per person by 30% from RM106,647 by the year 2025 (Ministry of International Trade and Industry, 2018). Analogically, this demonstrates that individual employee work performance does contribute to the overall

performance of the organization. Thus, it is important to conduct this research in order to avoid any productivity issues related to job performance and to reduce the rate of unproductivity among employees.

Additionally, Janardhanan and Raghavan (2018) stated that some employees in organizations are still confronted with emotional intelligence problems and issues. Employees experience emotional stress as a result of a heavy workload, which is one of the issues related to emotional intelligence. According to Ojo et al. (2021), the workload has increased since the COVID-19 pandemic, which created a climate of uncertainty among the public and put a significant strain on internal resources to address the issues that arose. As a result, when employees are overburdened, it causes fatigue and contributes to depression and mental stress. It will also contribute to poor job performance. According to Datuk Shamsuddin Bardan, Executive Director of the Malaysian Employers Federation, the number of cases of work-related depression has increased noticeably (MEF, 2017). He suggested that the authorities intervene because this issue could cause employees mental stress (Firdaus, 2017). Furthermore, according to the National Health Morbidity Survey (NHMS), mental health problems among adults increased from 10.7 percent in 1996 to 29.2 percent in 2015, affecting 4.2 million Malaysians. Simultaneously, it is estimated that four out of every ten Malaysians suffer from depression. It was also discovered that adults had a higher prevalence of mental health issues (Seng & Arumugam, 2016). As a result, understanding emotional intelligence is a critical issue for everyone, necessitating extensive research. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the influence of emotional intelligence and job performance among a multinational company's operators in southern state of Malaysia.

## **Literature Review**

### **Overview of Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence has become an important and popular scientific subject in the last few decades (Drigas & Papoutsis, 2018), with numerous definitions and models. Emotional intelligence (EI) has been defined as the ability to recognize feelings and attract and evoke feelings to help the mind. Furthermore, EI is also defined as understanding its feelings and meanings, and deeply control feelings, thereby aiding emotional and intellectual development (Istianingsih et al., 2020). According to Cuéllar-Molina et al. (2019), the operational definition of emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize one's own and others' feelings. If they can manage their emotions well, it indirectly allows them to form positive relationships with others. Fernández-Abascal & Martn-Daz (2015) agreed with Cuellar-Molina et al. (2019) that EI, in particular, is the ability to recognize and distinguish one's own and others' feelings and emotions. Furthermore, researchers Fernández-Abascal and Martn-Daz (2015) have emphasized that such emotional information can be used to guide a person's thoughts and actions. Yusoff et al. (2017) stated that emotional control is critical in a person's life because it allows them to avoid internal conflicts. According to Hopkins & Yonker (2015), emotions can influence decisions as well as human relationships and social interactions. A person who is unable to control their emotions will have difficulty interacting with others. Furthermore, Cohen & McKay (2020) stated that a person who is unable to control their emotions is unable to perform well and is classified as a less successful person.

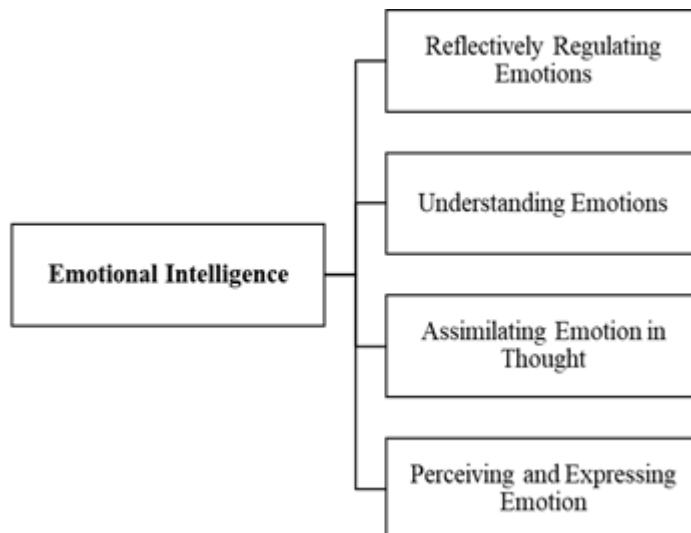


Figure 1 A four-branch model of the skills involved in emotional intelligence (Source: Mayer & Salovey, 1997)

Based on Figure 1, Salovey and Mayer (1990) have proposed a Model of Emotional Intelligence. According to Dhani & Sharma (2016), Salovey and Mayer coined the term "emotional intelligence" in 1990 and have since conducted research on its significance. Emotional intelligence (EI) is defined by Mayer and Salovey as the ability to recognize, evaluate, and express emotions, as well as access and process emotional information. This model proposed three constructs of EI: appraisal and expression of emotion, utilization of emotion, and regulation of emotion (Khraisat et al., 2015). However, they revised this model again in 1997, expanding it from three to four major areas of EI – 1) perception, appraisal, and expression of emotion, 2) emotional facilitation of thinking, 3) understanding and analyzing emotion, and 4) reflective regulation of emotions. According to Mayer et al. (2001), the four branches function hierarchically, with emotional perception acting as the most basic or bottom branch and emotional management acting as the most complex or top branch. Furthermore, Wong and Law 2002 created the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS), which is based on the model created by Mayer and Salovey in 1997 (Dhani & Sharma, 2017). Their scale consists of four different dimensions which are, Self-Emotional Appraisal, Other's Emotional Appraisal, Regulation of Emotion, and Use of Emotion.

The first dimension of WLEIS is a self-emotion appraisal, which refers to a person's capacity to comprehend and express their deep feelings naturally (Wong & Law, 2017). It also refers to an individual's ability to recognize emotions in oneself through physical states, feelings, and thoughts, as well as recognize and perceive emotions in other people, artwork, and language (Lee, 2015). Understanding one's own emotions require knowledge of what causes them, what their implications are, and how the emotions work (Zainal et al., 2017). It can be pointed out that people with exceptional ability in this area will perceive and acknowledge their emotions better than other people (Wong & Law, 2017). Next, others' emotion appraisal (OEA) is important to identify in order to assess emotional intelligence. According to Wong & Law (2017), this dimension is concerned with people's ability to recognize and comprehend the emotions of those around them. Understanding the emotions of those around us is essential for ensuring that they are always in a comfortable zone. According to Zainal et al. (2017), individuals with higher OEA are more delicate to others' emotions and can understand their feelings. Correspondingly, acknowledging other people's emotions necessarily requires

an understanding of what causes them, what the consequences are, and how the emotional responses work (Zainal et al., 2017).

Furthermore, in a study conducted by Sony & Mekoth (2016), the regulation of emotion (ROE) is used to assess emotional intelligence. ROE refers to a person's ability to manage their emotions, which allows them to recover from psychological distress more quickly (Wong & Law, 2017). From the statement, it can be stated that individuals must have mental stability in order to produce better emotional regulation. According to Zainal et al. (2017), individuals who are able to control their emotions will reap several benefits. Controlling stimuli to give maximum performance, controlling unhappiness and strong urge, preventing violent responses to provocations, and acting appropriately due to pressure to do otherwise are among the benefits. Pertaining to emotional intelligence, another dimension used is regarding the use of emotion (UOE). According to Wong & Law (2017), this dimension refers to an individual's ability to direct their emotions toward constructive activities and personal performance. Furthermore, UOE is related to people's ability to use their emotions appropriately in order to promote appropriate behaviors (Zainal et al., 2017). It is essential for an individual to be able to use emotions because they will have a significant impact on their life. If emotions are not used correctly, they can cause problems in a variety of areas. It can be stated that all dimensions of the emotional intelligence scale are important in addressing emotional intelligence, which affects job performance.

### **Overview of Job Performance**

According to Ogunleye and Osekita (2016), job performance is defined as an employee's ability to complete assigned duties in accordance with organizational set rules. Job performance encompasses all job-related activities that contribute to the achievement of organizational goals (Lepine et al., 2016). In addition, Job performance includes all job-related activities with outcomes (Ahearne et al., 2015). According to Judge & Zapata (2015), job performance is a measurable construct, but it also depends on the productive and efficient use of resources (Bozionelos et al., 2016). Muntazeri & Indrayanto (2018) agree with Bozionelos et al. (2016) with the statement of efficiency and effectiveness is taken into account when measuring job performance. Job performance is very important in an organization for achieving the company's highest goals. Gridwichai et al. (2020) define job performance as the total outcome that employees contribute to the organization. Furthermore, Othman and Muhsin (2020) defined performance as the achievement of organizational objectives, the fulfillment of organizational values, or the attainment of standards. A successful organization is determined by how well its employees perform in meeting the organization's objectives (Bin, 2016). Therefore, organizations must develop strategies to ensure that their employees always perform well.

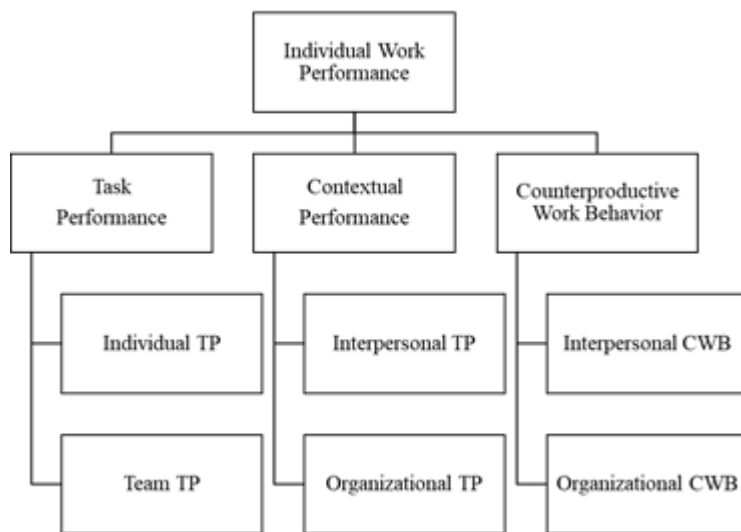


Figure 2 Individual work performance model (Source: Koopmans et al., 2011)

Based on figure 2, Koopmans developed this theory in 2011 based on Campbell's widely accepted definition of work performance through four dimensions: task performance, contextual performance, adaptive performance, and counterproductive work behavior (Van Der Vaart, 2021). Koopmans and colleagues used an iterative process to develop, improve, and validate the various versions of the instrument after conceptualizing and operationalizing work performance (Van Der Vaart, 2021). Koopmans et al. (2013) initially created a 47-item version of the questionnaire (IWPQ 0.1) based on selected indicators from the literature review. However, after developing an instrument to assess face validity, clarity, and readability and administering it to a representative sample of employees, the researchers discovered that three dimensions fit the Rasch model significantly better than the four dimensions where AP should be combined with CP. Koopmans et al. (2013) also stated that the second finding revealed generic items that fit the Rasch model for all employment sectors, resulting in a 14-item scale (IWPQ 0.2). However, due to poor targeting for some IWPQ 0.2 items, more difficult items for TP and CP and easier items for CWB were added, resulting in a 27-item version of the instrument (IWPQ 0.3). Individual work performance thus has three distinct dimensions: task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behavior. This dimension focuses on work systems' increased interdependence and uncertainty, as well as the resulting changes in the nature of IWPs. Therefore, IWP theory is assumed to be a holistic theory that identifies the causes of work system uncertainty from various perspectives for the purposes of this study. Furthermore, because all three dimensions are related to each other, this IWP theory is simple to measure relevant employee behaviors or actions. Therefore, in this study, the Heuristic Conceptual Framework of Individual Work Performance and instrument developed based on the model were used to measure the level of the job performance of the employees.

The first dimension is task performance, which refers to behavior in relation to the creation of a product or the provision of a service (Dubbelt et al., 2019). Koopmans et al. (2011) conducted a review of the generic framework, which included task-performance indicators such as completing job tasks, maintaining skills and knowledge, working accurately and

smartly, organizing and planning, and problem-solving. Contextual performance, also known as organizational citizenship behavior, is the second dimension of job performance (Fernandez-del-Rio et al., 2019). According to Dubbelt et al. (2019), contextual performance is behavior on the part that relates to organizational objectives by improving the social and psychological atmosphere. In the study of Koopmans et al. (2011), the contextual performance includes tasks other than work tasks, initiative, proactive personality, collaboration, and enthusiasm. Counterproductive work behavior is the third dimension of job performance. This dimension is defined as voluntary behavior that is detrimental to an organization's well-being (Dubbelt et al., 2019). The behaviours includes off-duty behavior, presentism, complaints, doing the job wrongfully on purpose, and misuse of privileges are all aspects of the dimension (Koopmans et al., 2011). Although counterproductive work behavior has a great connection with contextual performance, Umar et al. (2020) discovered that each dimension has its own uniqueness and domain.

Furthermore, in a study conducted by Sony & Mekoth (2016), the regulation of emotion (ROE) is used to assess emotional intelligence. ROE refers to a person's ability to manage their emotions, which allows them to recover from psychological distress more quickly (Wong & Law, 2017). From the statement, it can be stated that individuals must have mental stability in order to produce better emotional regulation. According to Zainal et al. (2017), individuals who are able to control their emotions will reap several benefits. Controlling stimuli to give maximum performance, controlling unhappiness and strong urge, preventing violent responses to provocations, and acting appropriately due to pressure to do otherwise are among the benefits. Pertaining to emotional intelligence, another dimension used is regarding the use of emotion (UOE). According to Wong & Law (2017), this dimension refers to an individual's ability to direct their emotions toward constructive activities and personal performance. Furthermore, UOE is related to people's ability to use their emotions appropriately in order to promote appropriate behaviors (Zainal et al., 2017). It is essential for an individual to be able to use emotions because they will have a significant impact on their life. If emotions are not used correctly, they can cause problems in a variety of areas. It can be stated that all dimensions of the emotional intelligence scale are important in addressing emotional intelligence, which affects job performance.

### **Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance**

Numerous studies have been conducted to date on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance (Joseph et al., 2015). Call centre agents (Sony & Mekoth, 2016), service sector (Zainal et al., 2018), education (Ismail et al., 2020), retail (Alheet & Hamdan, 2021), and middle-level management (Dhani et al., 2016) are all involved in this type of research. The findings of Sony & Mekoth (2016) study revealed a significant relationship between job performance and emotional intelligence. In other study, Pekaar et al. (2017) investigated the same variables in the context of a call center environment and discovered a strong relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. This indicates that the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance appears logical and relevant for further investigation. According to Alhamami et al. (2020), studies on performance have revealed that emotional intelligence is the key to job performance. Emotional intelligence has an influence on the workplace (Wahyudi, 2018), and the level of emotional intelligence that individuals have influences their performance (Miao, 2017).

Livesey (2017) also stated that emotional intelligence is required for producing quality work, positively impacting employee-employer relationships, and improving organizational performance. Wen et al. (2019) stressed that high emotional intelligence in employees can lead to better performance. Meanwhile, if employees lack of emotional intelligence, their performance will decrease. In similar contexts, Welikala & Dayarathna (2015) stated that employees with high emotional intelligence work better because it allows them to have innovative ideas. Emotional intelligence influences job performance because it expands on how individuals think and behave in the workplace (Alhamami et al., 2020). Wong & Law (2017) who studies the emotional intelligence link in the workplace also discovered a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. As a result of the preceding empirical evidence, it is logical to say that emotional intelligence has a positive and significant relationship with job performance. However, more evidence-based research is needed to establish concrete results on the extent to which emotional intelligence influences job performance. In this regard, the current research will aid in closing the gap. Therefore, the hypothesis is developed as follows.

H1 = There is a relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance among a multinational company's operators in southern state of Malaysia.

### **Methodology**

The target population of this study was employees to be exact the operators in a multinational company (MNC) operated in the southern state of Malaysia. A simple random sampling was used to select the samples of this study. This is a cross-sectional study in which data was collected using quantitative methods by distributing questionnaires. In total, 103 completed questionnaires were returned by the respondents. To assess emotional intelligence, the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) developed by Wong & Law (2002) was used in this study. It assesses four dimensions, which are self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, use of emotion, and regulation of emotion. A scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) was used to rate the response. The four scales have acceptable internal reliability with Cronbach alpha 0.85. On the other hands, the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ) by Koopman et al. (2014) was used to assess the job performance among the studied operators. This instrument contains three dimensions and it used 4-point scale ranging from seldom (0) to always (4). The dimensions consist of task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behavior are the three. The Cronbach alpha value of 0.91 indicates that IWPQ has an excellent internal consistency. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 23 was used to analyse descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Meanwhile, SmartPLS was adopted to analyse the linear relationships between emotional intelligence and job performance among the studied operators.

### **Research Findings**

#### **1 Demographic Profiles**

The majority of the respondents of current study are female (73.8%) with the remaining being male (26.2%). Most of them age between 20 to 40 years old (95.1%) and the rest have an age over 40 years old (4.9%). Findings regarding job tenure, most of the respondents had been working in the company between 1 to 5 years (94.2%) followed by less than 1 year (3.9%) and a few respondents that worked between 6 to 10 years (1.9%) of working duration.



### Level of Emotional Intelligence

Table 1 presents the level of emotional intelligence among the employees. According to the research findings, the overall mean of emotional intelligence is 4.36 (SD=0.311). This demonstrates a high level of emotional intelligence, pointing out that employees can regulate their emotions and understand the emotions of others. They strive to always consider how their actions affect others, and they can make predictions to avoid causing harm. Simply put, employees who have high emotional levels can help to build relationships, reduce team stress, defuse conflict, and improve job satisfaction. Detailed analysis found that self-emotion appraisal dimension reaches a high level (M=4.31, SD=0.425). This high level indicates that respondents can complete the task assigned more effectively and are motivated to do so. Next, the findings show others' emotion appraisal dimension reaches a high level also (SD=4.21, SD=0.435). This high level explains that the respondent is sensitive to the feelings and emotions of others, as well as having a strong understanding of their own emotions. Furthermore, it can be seen that use of emotion achieved a high level with the mean score is 4.55 (SD=0.425). This high level demonstrates that the respondent makes an effort to complete each task assigned to them, as well as setting goals for themselves and working hard to achieve them on a consistent basis. On top of that, regulation of emotion dimension has also achieved a high level with an overall mean of 4.39 and a standard deviation of 0.433. This finding indicates that the respondents have good emotional control and can deal with problems rationally.

**Table 1**

*Level of emotional intelligence among the respondents*

Dimensions	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)	Level
Self-Emotion Appraisal	4.31	0.425	High
Others' Emotion Appraisal	4.21	0.435	High
Use of Emotion	4.55	0.425	High
Regulation of Emotion	4.39	0.433	High
<b>Overall Emotional intelligence</b>	<b>4.36</b>	<b>0.311</b>	<b>High</b>

### Level of Job Performance

According to the research findings, the overall mean of job performance is 3.72 with a standard deviation of 0.180 (refer Table 2). This demonstrates that job performance is at a high level, implying that the employees are highly productive and motivated. They strive to always fulfill their role's duties and complete required tasks to meet and exceed their goals while remaining true to the company's values. To put it simply, the employees who completed their tasks successfully can contribute to success and help the organization reach its objectives. Further analysis of the data reveals that task performance dimension reaches a high level with a mean score of 3.68 (SD=0.285). It indicates that respondents are able to perform effectively at work and recall the tasks that must be finished. Next, the result of descriptive analysis for contextual performance also shows a high level (M= 3.59; SD=0.290). This high level shows that the respondents are capable of performing new tasks after completing their previous ones and that they make an effort to keep their professional skills updated from time to time. Furthermore, the result for counterproductive work behavior brings the overall mean for this dimension to a high level with a mean score of 3.89 and the standard deviation of 0.218. It means that respondents exhibit productive work behavior in

that they are always positive about their work and are less likely to discuss negative aspects of their work with people outside of the organization.

**Table 2**

*Level of job performance among the respondents*

Dimensions	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)	Level
Task Performance	3.68	0.285	High
Contextual Performance	3.59	0.290	High
Counterproductive Work Behavior	3.89	0.218	High
<b>Overall Job performance</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>0.180</b>	<b>High</b>

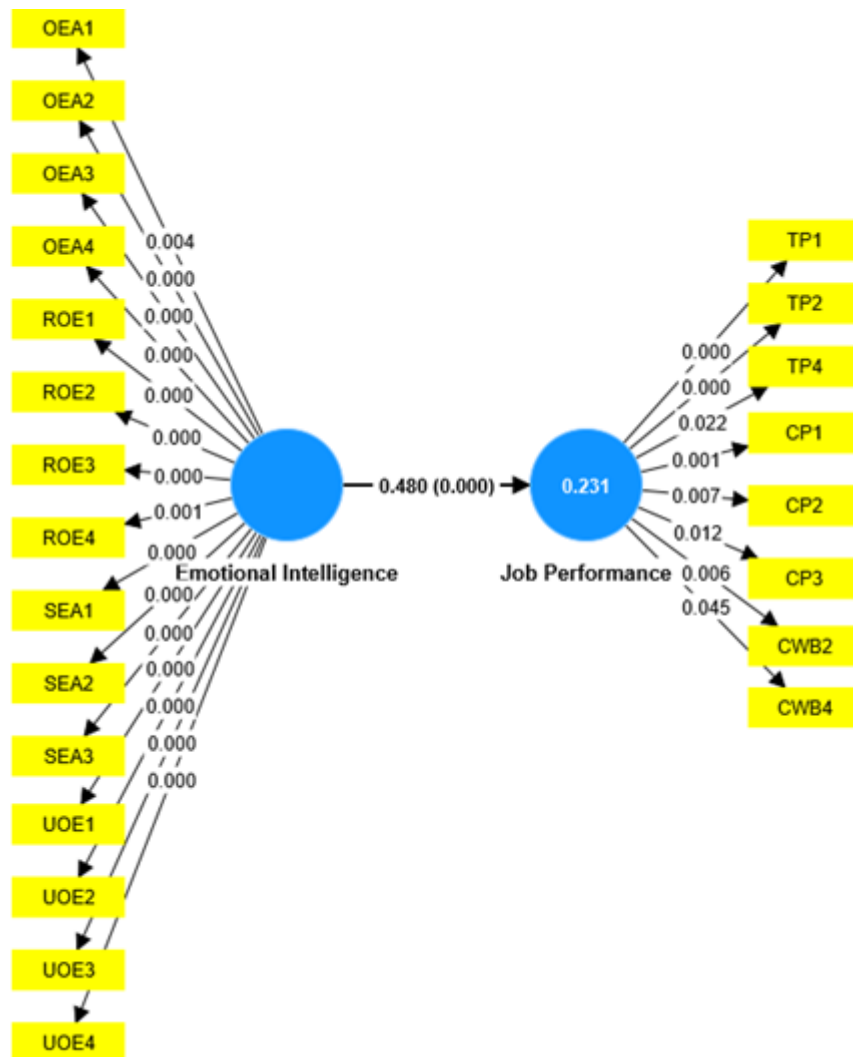
### Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance

The data obtained were analysed through IBM SPSS version 23.0 and Smart PLS version 4.0.9.5 statistics. This is because Partial Least Square (PLS) is able to analyse all the constructs involved at the same time (Farooq and Markovic, 2016). Thus, in this study, researchers use SmartPLS software based on structural equation modelling (SEM) using the PLS method. SEM is the second-generation multivariate data analysis method most commonly used for research in the social sciences because it can test theoretically supported linear and additional causal models (Haenlin and Kaplan, 2004). Thus, the findings of this study are presented in Table 3 and the analysis of a model to measure the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance is shown in Figure 3. Based on Ramayah et al. (2018), the effect of the relationship between two relationships can be known through the analysis of R<sup>2</sup>. The findings show that the value of R<sup>2</sup> obtained is 0.231. This means that the effect of emotional intelligence on job performance is 23.1% in this study. The t-value obtained is 8.084. According to Ramayah et al. (2018), this t value explains that the relationship between these two variables is significant. As a result, the hypothesis of the study is supported. It can be summed up as the ability of employees to act appropriately and produce better work when they are aware of their emotions and know what to do in a workplace setting.

**Table 3**

Summary of analysis findings on the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance.

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path Coeff	Std Error	t-value	Decision	R <sup>2</sup>
H1	Emotional Intelligence → Job Performance	0.480	0.079	8.084	Supported	0.231



SEA= Self-emotion appraisal, OEA= Others’ emotion appraisal, ROE= Regulation of emotion, UOE= Use of emotion, CP= Contextual performance, TP= Task performance, CWB= Counterproductive behavior.

Figure 3 Analysis of the model to measure the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance

**Discussions and Recommendations****A High Level of Emotional Intelligence among the Multinational Company's Operators in Southern State of Malaysia**

The findings of the current study revealed that respondents have high emotional intelligence. It was found out that the respondents perceived an elevated ability to use emotions effectively in managing themselves and positively influencing relationships with others. People with higher emotional intelligence have good social functioning, which allows them to have higher social abilities than people who have low emotional intelligence. Hence, the outcome of the emotional level indicates that emotional intelligence is associated with job performance. Research findings revealed that the Use of Emotion (UOE) has contributed to the highest mean score compared to the other emotional intelligence dimensions. This dimension refers to individuals' ability to direct their emotions toward constructive activities and personal performance. This finding is consistent with Zainal et al. (2018) that use of emotion is related to people's ability to use their emotions appropriately in order to promote appropriate behaviors (Zainal et al., 2018). It is essential for an individual to be able to use emotions well because it will have a significant impact on their life. If emotions are not used correctly, they can cause problems in a variety of areas especially in job performance.

Next, Regulation of Emotion (ROE) is also another dimension that caused the high level of emotional intelligence among operators at manufacturing in Johor. The ability to monitor and consider one's own and other people's emotions is indicated by this dimension. This finding is consistent with Wong & Law (2017) that ROE refers to person's ability to manage their emotions, which allows them to recover from psychological distress more quickly. It can be stated that individuals must have mental stability in order to produce better emotional regulation. Furthermore, the study's findings show that the Self-Emotional Appraisal (SEA) dimension is also at a high level. This proves unequivocally that the operators at the company under study have a high level of understanding of their own emotions. In order to deliver moderately or highly scripted interactions successfully, individuals must be aware of their current emotional states in order to make necessary adjustments before interacting with others. These findings are consistent with Othman et al. (2020). Last but not least, the findings show that Others' Emotional Appraisal (OEA) has the lowest mean score among the other dimensions of emotional intelligence, but still being at a high level. The results of this study exhibit that respondents have an understanding of the OEA dimension, which makes them more sensitive to other people's emotions and proficient at understanding other people's thoughts. This is in line with earlier research by Guan & So (2016), who claimed that individuals who were skilled at assessing others' emotions also possessed a high degree of courage and faith, which encouraged them to take real action and produce high performance.

**A High Level of Job Performance among the Multinational Company's Operators in Southern State of Malaysia**

It is found that the level of job performance among the respondents in the multinational company is at a high level. Findings found that the employee's job performance is satisfactory and applicable to contribute to the overall success of the organization in achieving its objectives. Job performance is very important in an organization for achieving the company's highest goals. A successful organization is determined by how well its employees perform in meeting the organization's objectives. According to the findings, the Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB) dimension ranks first among the other dimensions, indicating that the level

of this dimension is high. This high level demonstrates that respondents consistently focused on the positive aspects of a work situation rather than the negative aspects and being less likely to talk to people outside of the organization about negative aspects of their work. The findings are consistent with a prior study by Bal & De Lange (2015), which found that performing the human function for employees becomes a crucial factor that must be taken into account in an organization.

Next, the findings from the previous chapter show that the Task Performance (TP) dimension is also at a high level. This high level indicates that respondents can comprehend their tasks, which ultimately enables them to carry out their responsibilities successfully. Good job performance is important in assisting organizations in reaching their objectives. Thus, when employees contribute productively to their work, it indirectly contributes to a greater level of work quality. In line with Debusscher et al. (2017), who stated that there were many positive perceptions about increasing dependence in terms of completing their own job task. Lastly, the findings indicate that the level of job performance in Contextual Performance (CPU) dimension is also high. This demonstrates that employees approach their tasks positively, which improves the interpersonal, psychological, and social environment at work. This study supports evidence from the previous study by Pandita & Ray (2018), which found that when employees work well and have the trust as well as cooperation of their colleagues, they outperform individuals and teams with poor relationships.

### **A Significant Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance among the Multinational Company's Operators in Southern State of Malaysia**

The analysis from SmartPLS has discovered that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance in the studied company. The finding of this study was consistent with a study carried out by Zainal et al. (2017) which found that there was significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. The result indicates that the characteristics of emotional intelligence such as self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, use of emotion and regulation of emotion had influence on job performance among employees. Following that, the direction of this study is positive correlation. This positive direction indicates that the higher the emotional intelligence, the better the job performance. In other words, if employees are highly regarded for their emotional intelligence, they will promote better job performance. The result of this study is being supported by Wong & Law (2017), who stated that the researcher found a significant positive relationship between some work outcomes, such as job satisfaction and job performance. In addition, employees with high emotional intelligence can improve their performance by viewing job performance characteristics positively. Moreover, despite the fact that this study found a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance, its correlation strength is only moderate. It differs slightly from the findings of the research by Zainal et al. (2017), which found a strong relationship between both of the studied variables. On the other hand, this moderately significant positive correlation indicates that the respondent's perception of emotional intelligence is still important in achieving good job performance in a company.

### **Significance of Study**

Through this research, employees at manufacturing companies will be better aware of how to control their emotional intelligence levels to work efficiently, which can contribute to individual and organizational excellence. Not only that, but this research may be able to assist

organizations in better meeting the demands of their employees in terms of career advancement. Furthermore, the targeted company will gain access to knowledge and instructions on the dimensions of emotional intelligence as well as the dimensions of job performance. The organization will learn more about these two dimensions because of this, and will be able to help reduce the amount of emotional intelligence concerns in the workplace. Next, knowledge and information in this study can be used as an academic reference by other scholars because it contains favorable information. Not only that, but the precise information and data evaluated can be utilized as a reference for future evaluators to better comprehend the dimensions used. In addition, based on the reading some articles, it can conclude that little research has been done on relevant themes. Therefore, future researchers can broaden their interest in research-related themes while also expanding their knowledge in the field of emotional intelligence among manufacturing workers. When many future researchers conduct studies on this topic, it will indirectly raise awareness among researchers itself and employees about the value of emotional intelligence in assessing an individual's job performance.

### **Recommendation to the Studied Company and Future Research**

Overall, the result of the current study suggests that organizations can improve the level of emotional intelligence among employees through emotional intelligence training programs or seminars. Training or seminars may assist the employee in gaining confidence and understanding of the information presented to them. Additionally in this training program, the organization can create awareness for the employees to create high-achieving employees so that company productivity will increase. Next, in order to improve the level of job performance among employees, the organization needs to promoting employee interaction, for instance, by holding a morning briefing before employees do their work. The morning briefing can assist the company in quickly and effectively communicating an issue to employees. Secondly, organizations may undertake job redesign in order to better align roles with the changing environment both within and outside the organization. With this job redesign, the organization can focus on employee interest in work tasks and how they can be improved. Aside from recommendations for the organization, a few recommendations were also provided for future researchers. It is advisable for future researchers to carry out their research in a variety of locations with the participation of numerous multinational companies. It allows more generalization of the findings. Another recommendation is that researchers can adopt a mixed-mode approach by combining qualitative and quantitative methods when collecting data and information. This method enables respondents to express their opinions on the studied variables and at the same time able to gather data from a large number of respondents.

### **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance among multinational company's employees to be exact operators in southern state of Malaysia. Several statistics found that low labor productivity contributed to a decline in job performance in Malaysia's manufacturing sector including multinational companies (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2016; Bank Negara Malaysia, 2017). It is believed that low productivity has a great connection with inability to manage emotions at the workplace. Therefore, the findings of this study will fill a research gap in terms of the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance, particularly in Malaysia

context. Findings on descriptive analysis reveal that there is a high level of emotional intelligence and job performance among the multinational company's operators in southern state of Malaysia. The findings also highlighted that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance. Therefore, in order to improve their employees' job performance, the organization needs to improve employee emotional intelligence.

Despite all the findings, the current study has several limitations that can be identified from this research. First, this study is using quantitative methods due to its only focus on questionnaires distribution. This method only gives a small amount of information and prevents the researcher from posing additional queries. Next, this research was conducted among the employees in one multinational company only. Hence, the context in which this study was conducted may limit the generalizability of the findings to other multinational companies because the data can only reflect the company itself. Furthermore, the convenience sampling method used in this study. In conclusion, this study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that emotional intelligence correlates with job performance in the organization. The current study also supports Alhamami et al. (2020) in their research where they found that emotional intelligence is the key influence on the betterment of employee's job perform.

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